

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 21, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Schumer, Chair Durbin, and Chair Murray:

Thank you for your ongoing work to support efforts to reduce our nation's alarming rates of violent crime, including gun violence.

It is urgent that we apply Federal resources to a national campaign to reduce violence and violent crime and to build a more peaceful and secure America.

As we work on budget reconciliation legislation, I urge the inclusion of at least \$5 billion to support evidence-based interventions to help reduce violent crime, including gun violence, within our communities.

Violence is at unacceptable levels nationwide, and Georgia is no exception. Atlanta has seen a nearly 60% increase in homicides in 2021 over this time last year, which was already a historically deadly year for the city. Elsewhere across the country, homicide rates in large cities increased by more than 30 percent in 2020 and another 24 percent at the beginning of 2021. These trends extend beyond city limits, too, with other regions experiencing elevated rates of homicides, aggravated assaults, and other violent crime.

While there is no single cause of or solution to crime rates, we know that there are evidence-based community violence intervention (CVI) strategies that make our communities safer. These community-based programs engage trusted messengers from local communities to engage directly with individuals at highest risk of engaging in violence and have proven to help reduce and prevent homicides and other violence crime.

For example, Atlanta's Anti-Violence Advisory Council, tasked with reviewing the city's plans to combat violent crime, specifically urged the expansion of pilot programs like Atlanta's Cure Violence program. That program trains community members and leaders impacted by gun violence to help interrupt retaliatory violence through mediation and conflict resolution.

The success of these programs and the number of lives they can save, however, depends on robust and sustained funding. I urge you to support these life-saving efforts in budget reconciliation legislation for the Senate Judiciary and HELP Committees.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Ossoff", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jon Ossoff
United States Senator